

A N
EPISTLE
F O R
V N I T Y,

To prevent the
Wiles of the Enemy.

To be read in all the Churches of Christ.

Written at the Command of the LORD, from the Yearning of Everlasting Bowels unto them all, unto whom is wished *Grace, Mercy and Peace*, by him who is a Sufferer in outward Bonds, because he cannot forsake the Assemblies of the Righteous, but loves them more than all the Pleasures of *Egypt*, and fears to withdraw from them more than to incur the Wrath and Censures of the Potentates of the Earth.

JOHN CROOK,

LONDON, Printed for Robert Wilson, 1661.

THE EPISTLE

OF VNTY

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A N
E P I S T L E
F O R
U N I T Y, &c.

Dear Lambs of my Fathers Fold, who have been rescued out of the hands of the Devourer, and known the fore bitings of the Wolves, and the affrighting roarings of the Lions, and the craft of the Foxes, who made a prey upon you while you were without a Shepherd, and while you were in the open Field, and upon the wide Mountains, without an hedge about you, or a wall to defend you; but every wild Beast and ravening Bird was ready to prey upon you, and there was none found either to pity or gather you, until the good Shepherd (from whose Fold you had strayed) sought you out, and brought you home, some upon his shoulders, and some drove gently, and others (who would have run away after you were found, being accustomed to wander, and in love with your wandering) he constrained by his sharpness; after whom he hath had a watchful eye, because of your liableness to go astray again, to feed by your selves, and not with the rest of the Flock, whereby you have been liable, not only to be torn by the Bryars and Thorns, but also to be bitten with the Wolf and other preying Beasts, unto your wounding again.

O all ye Lambs and Sheep of my Fathers Fold, were you not all torn and wounded by going astray? and many of you ready to perish of your wounds, and weary with complaining? and yet could not but complain, but were even tired out of that also; so that you did but add to your own sorrow, where-

by you made your condition worse than the worst, by being your own tormentors, your sorrow keeping you from rest, and your complaints from feeding where others got some relief, and your strength being wasted and your power gone, so that you could not shift nor flee, but lay open to the Spoiler to execute his fury upon you, so helpless were you in your selves in that day; And in this state were many of you found, when the Shepherd of *Israel* arose to seek his Sheep. Oh do you not remember these things? was not your grief unutterable, and your pain grown to that extremity, that you had perished immediately, if he had not found you when he did? Oh! how were some of you fled into *solitary holes*, & others into the *clifts of the craggy Rocks*, and were mourning *there*, deeming that your eyes were as a fountain of tears, because of the *wickedness of the Wicked*, and *miserable estate of mankind*, and there was *no helper* found: And others of you like a *Sparrow chirping alone* upon the house top, seeing over the World with all its glory, and yet could not tell how to get rid of it, but still had an eye over it, and yet could not break through it; and this caused you to *sigh and mourn*, and you could not meet with a Mate or Companion amongst all the sons of *Adam*; and so inward sorrow wasted your strength, and outward griefs consumed your flesh; and when you went to break through, you were torn by the Bryars and Thorns, that you could not find a way to escape.

And others of you, who had learned to herd with the Beasts of the field, and could eat of their Bread, and drink of their Drink, and lye down in their Resting Place; Oh! how did the Shepherd chafe with his Judgements, and hunt you with his Crosses and Afflictions outward and inward, to bring you home? and what care hath he taken since your recovery to keep you in the Fold amongst the Lambs, that you may no more find out any of your old walks or haunts, but be kept for ever to feed with the Lambs, that you all might lye down together as Sheep of one Fold?

Oh! my bowels, my bowels! my heart, my heart! and all that is within me is pained for you, and mourns in secret after you, and cryes day and night unto the Shepherd, to look af-

ter you and take care of you all, that none of you be lost, nor that any of you stray nor be worried, nor hunted any more; but that you may for ever lie down together, and neither hurt, grieve, nor offend one another, nor harden those who yet go astray; but that all may be kept in the fence of what (and where) once you were, and of the Love, Care and Mercy that pitied you then, and healed and bound you up, and brought you home, and passed by the remembrance of all your treipasses, and loved you freely. Oh! let the bowels of the Shepherd to you, beget compassions unto the Scattered, and unto one another, who will again soon be scattered, if he look not after you: for, you were all once in that nature by which you were *Children of Wrath*, and in *darkness*, as well as *others*; and wherein any of you differ (either from what your selves once were, or from what others are) it is by that which you have freely received.

Oh! art thou strong? and have many great things been done by thee? and many mighty men been made to fall before thee? and the Host of the *Philistines* been put to flight? and the power of *Darkness* (and *Satan* the Prince thereof) been withstood, and made to turn his back, and vail to thy strength? and the dead been raised by thee? and the graves opened at the word which went out of thy mouth? and many which were bound, as in fetters of Iron, have been loosed; and others that have been shut up close Prisoners in the Pit where no Light shined unto them; and yet at thy Rebuke, and lifting up of thy Voice, the Dead have risen, and those Prisoners come forth, and sounded out the Praises of that God in whose power thou didst it. And hath the Tongue of the *Learned* been in thy mouth, and the *Weary* been refreshed by thee? and the *Mourners* been comforted through hearing of thy delightful Voice, so that the evil spirits have fled away when thou hast taken up thy Harp, and all the *Minstrels* and worldly joys have departed at thy appearance, so terrible was thy Presence, and dreadful thy Countenance, that no eye was so quick as to abide undazled when thou lookest upon it, nor any craft or deceit so closely couched but it startled when thou madest search; nor any paint so artificial, but it melted before

before thy dissolving Presence and scorching Glory, so that all spirits were discerned, and tryed, and judged with righteous Judgments in the day of thy Strength and Beauty? O how did the Wise men of *Egypt*, and the Southsayer, Peepers and Diviners, with all the Magicians and Masters of that Crew, together with all the Merchants of *Babylon*, flee before Thee like the routing of a mighty Army, and scattering of all their Generals and Officers of Command! How wast thou and thy Companions like *David* with all his Worthies! and how have you, like Mighty men, brake through the whole Camp of the Uncircumcised, to bring Water unto the thirsty! What Service was too hard for you to venture upon, to relieve the Captives, and set free them who were bound, who (like *Samson*) have broken all the Cords and Bindings of the *Philistines*, and snapped them assunder like a thread, with many more Achievements that have been done by you, which time would fail to record; but living monuments remain, as Pillars and Standards reared up, to keep in remembrance what hath been done by your strength in the God whom you served, to his praise and eternal glory for ever.

For, was it not all by his own Arm, clothed with flesh, and his Everlasting Strength in earthen vessels, that one of the *wombes of babes and sucklings* he might ordain strength, and perfect his Praise for ever? Yea, was any thing yours in all this work, besides the infirmity? and was it not all his, that *no flesh might glory in his Presence*? Therefore, O all you Children of the Lord (without respect of Persons) that have seen his wonders and mighty goings forth, and have beheld his marvelous doings, not only as *Spectators*, but *sharers in the Victories*, and *dividers of the Spoil with the Mighty*, whose souls have been delivered out of Captivity, and rescued from the Land of Darkness; who have drunk of the Water of Life, that hath been brought unto you by the Valiants of *Israel*, through the hazard of their lives; Oh! do not you forget the sweetness of the Water, nor the dangers they ran who ventured through the Enemies Camp to bring it unto you, with their lives in their hands. Oh how sweet was it unto you then! and how did you prize it beyond all the Rivers of *Damascus*! let your love never

never abate unto it, but heighten more and more; for it is not of a gluttoning or wearying nature, but provokes the appetite, and stirs up the desire after more of the same for ever; for it's the viciated palate that blames good diet, and the full stomach that loaths the honey-comb; but the *true Sept* drinks the *Wine* new continually in the *Father's Kingdom*, and the *Redeemed* sing a *New Song*, and have all things new and fresh; as the Water out of the Fountain, springing up unto eternal life, where nothing can remain in the old channel, but is washed away by the running of the *pure Water*, that proceeds from the *Fountain*. Hear ye, hear ye, O ye Children of *Jacob*, what is the Advice and Counsel of a poor redeemed Captive, once your *Companion* in *Bonds*, and now in *Freedom*. Oh! as we mourned once under the Oppression of the Oppressor together, So let us now rejoice in that Love, that hath pitied and set us free; let nothing stop our mouths from praising, nor our hearts from rejoicing in the ocean of Eternal Kindness and Mercy, that hath delivered us. Oh! let us haste, first, upon the top of Mount *Sion*, opening our mouths in *Blessings* and *Thanksgivings* unto our God for ever, who hath made and chosen us, *so he a People, that were not a People*, that we may keep his *Statutes*, and delight in his *Law*; and then let us stand upon Mount *Ebal*, that the Curses and Righteous Judgements of the Lord may come upon the head of the Wicked One, and all that would divide us from God, or one from another; and whatsoever rejoiceth in unrighteousness, or delighteth in false Judgment, and upon that rock of Bitterness that brings forth *Gall* and *Hormwood*. (that nothing may escape the Righteous Stroke of the Almighty) with all that genders to Bondage, or would entangle our hearts and minds, whereby that *Sweet Peace* and *Rest*, and *Satisfaction* in the Lord God might not be enjoyed, as heretofore it hath been. For the Wicked One will be sowing his *Tares* in the night of security and carelessness, and it will soon spread and grow, that thou canst not get it rooted out of thy heart and mind, but it will eat, defile and stain, that thy very *Cornings* will be *disfigured*, and the *Beow* (which once thou hadst will be *moored* by it: so that now thou, who sometimes wast *wise*, and full of *free* and *workings*, wilt be so changed, that

that nothing but roughness and envyings of Jacob's Blessings secretly follows thee, with an Evil Eye to trie out new Faults, and a memory to call to mind the old infirmities of thy Brethren; whereby thou wilt have a large Treasury of Evil in thy heart, which will be furnishing thy mind and thoughts with unprofitable matter, unto the daily wounding of thy Life, and Clouding of thy Understanding, and thickening of the Vail and Mask over thy Beauty. And all this may be done by the Enemy under pretence of Valour, and Witness bearing against Formality and Decour. Oh how easie is it for the Simple to be Deceived here, and the strong to be betrayed, as through Dalilah's Flatteries, saying, it is for want of Love to God and Zeal for him, if a Testimony without delay be not born, and a dislike shewed against such and such things, whereby the angry patt will soon get up, and quench the Love to Brethren, and drown the Mercy, so that all will be covered besides the hard Rocks and lofty Mountains, and upon these they may see afar off to the Enemies Country, but cannot behold the Holy Land with its Inhabitants on the other side the Sea. And from hence, if the watch be not kept, may even the Valiant in Israel receive a stroke, and come to a loss by this craft and disguise of the Evil One.

And then others perceiving it (against whom the offence was taken) not Dwelling always in the Lees (that covers all) but venturing too much to take the Air, and to walk as upon the Walls (without the Cattle) may soon let in the knowledge, and taking notice of it, which will beget the same in them, whereby the distance will be increased, and the Evil One will gain Ground, that the Enemy will soon shew himself to the troubling of Israel; and so will the Evil Seed be scattered abroad, and gender unto more ungodliness, for want of a timely prevention, both in the one and the other. And thus may the Lambs of my Fathers fold be disturbed by the little Foxes, who should be taken by the Machine of Israel, that they might not wander to hurt.

Therefore, O ye Children and Aged Men, with the Leaders of the Tribes of Israel, remember how easie it is for you all to be seduced, if the watch be not diligently kept, for

Satan will be standing at the right hand of *Joshua* to resist him. Oh! call to mind what is recorded in the Scriptures of Truth; how the *man of God* (after he had gone forth and finished his *Message*, in crying against the *Altar* at *Bethel*, and after he had withstood the *Temptation* of the *King*) was slain by the *Lion* for going from the Word of the Lord in himself, and hearkening unto the Counsel of the old Prophet, whereby he was deceived, and returned not according unto the Command of the Lord. And (my Dear Brethren) *Paul* a *Champion* in *Israel* and *Master Builder* in *Gods Work*, saw need (in the bowels of Love and Mercy) that the *Faithful* without respect of *Persons* should watch one over another; did (as need required) say to *Archippus*, Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it. And did not Satan present himself amongst the Sons of God in the dayes past, when they were met together? And oh Remember, the *Serpent* got into *Paradise* to tempt from the *Innocency*, who is the same that ever he was, and most busie about those who are chiefest in the Work of the Lord; for who was so tempted as the Son of God? Therefore let the strong bear the infirmities of the weak, least they also be tempted: for we all stand by Faith, and he that is most in the Life of the Son, is most sensible of the hurts of others, and most touched with the feeling of their wounds; not slightly passing by like the *Priest* and *Levite*, but mercifully pitying and healing, like the Good *Samaritan*: for it is a Symptom of hardness in him, that makes slight of the Wounds and Bruises of his Brethren, thereby pouring Brine into their Wounds, rather then the Oyl of Love and Tenderness. Such Physicians rather help to fester then cure the hurt, and to increase the pain, then to stop the spreading of the Disease, whereby a little slip doth prove as a dangerous Sprain, and a small bruise sometimes to the loss of a Member, and grieving of the whole Body; and all for want either of Skill, or Sence, (or both,) in the Physician; Where Skill is wanting there the Physician may Administer that which doth increase the Distemper, and thereby Disparage himself and indanger the Patient; and where Sence is wanting, there Austerity and Rigidness is usually met withal. So that he which Feeds the Lambs (and hurts them

them nor) must himself be *Holy* and *Harmless*, and *Separate* from *Defilement*, and *touched* with the *feeling* of their *Infirmities*; having *shoulders* to *carry* the *Lame on*, as well as a *Tongue* to *Direct* the *Ignorant*; and *Arms* to *bear up* the *weary*, as well as *Feet* to *go before* them in *Example*; and one who ought to *Feed* the *Lambs*, as a *Testimony* of his own *Love* to the *Father*, and *wash* their *Feet*, as an *Example* of *Humility*; not seeking *Honour*, least he be infected with *Lordliness* thereby, and so by seeking *Preheminence* (by *Eldership*, or some other outward thing) hurt the *Lambs*, and stop the *Simplicity*, that otherwise would have had them highly in esteem, for their *Works sake* in the *Power*, but now will be hindered, because looked for; whereby the *Enemy* will get advantage, of the one by seeking it, and the other by taking notice of it, that *Prejudice* will increase and the *Life* in both be hurt, and all for want of *Watching* to be content with the *Honour that comes from God onely*, and himself to be as one that serveth the lowest and weakest Babe, striving rather to be under all, then seeking to be over any; counting it *Honour* to serve, knowing sensibly that *one is their Father and Master, even God*, and they have all but *one Lord and Master*, unto which, both he that Teacheth, and they that are taught, must be subject, as the *Body* unto the *Wisdom* and *Direction* of the *Head*; so must all be unto *Christ* the *Promised Seed*; and if any *hold not the Head*, they run into the *Errour*, and so out of the *Sence*, by which onely the *Members* of the *Body* can serve one another in *Love*, the *Law* which *God* hath set to govern the *Body* by: for, he that is most in the *Seed*, is most in the *Life*, and so in the *Sence* whereby the *Unity* and *Sympathy* in the *Body* is preserved; and that *Member* most grieves for the hurts and bruises of the rest, where the *Sence* is quickest, whereby its usefulness in the *Body* is discerned, and the double esteem and honour is given unto it by all the living *Members*, which is not sought by him; but given freely by others, because they are *Sensible* of the usefulness of that *Member* to the *Body*; and so is the whole *Edified* in and *Built up* by *Love*. But if, through any prevalent humour, the health of any be impaired, whereby the *Sence* is lost or benumbed, that it feels

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not when others are hurt, and yet will continue to Officiate in the Body, whereby the rest are grieved; yet in that case it must not be ruggedly fallen upon, least through its own unsensibleness, it hurt the living Members without either mercy or Sense, and so either make them grieve or wholly unsensible also, unto the increasing of further discord in the Body; but rather gentleness and forbearance must be used, as by the application (not of harshness, and present judging, or standing at a distance but) of warm cloths, and suppling oils, used by a gentle hand, with much pains and often Exhortation in the stirrings of Love and risings of the Life; and yet feeds not the benumbedness or senselessness, but cherisheth the *Life*, and so recovers the Sense, whereby it is restored to the former office in the Body, and more filled with *Compassion, Usefulness* and *Diligence*, then before; and the other Members are now made more sensible of the benefit of *Patience* and *long-suffering*, and sees from whence that Springs that would Limit unto seven times; and how narrow and short it is of the fulness of Mercy it self, that is unlimited, but binds the Limiting Spirit, unto the perfecting of the praises of the God of Everlasting Goodness and Mercy. And thus will the *Wiles* of the *Enemy* be prevented, and the *Body Preserved in Unity*, and Edifie it self in *Love*. And hereby will most abundant honour be bestowed upon the most uncomely parts, and the World be convinced that you are the Disciples of Christ, and have Learned of him to *love one another*, and in Love (as the Members of the natural Body) to *serve one another*, and to *Minister* to its *Benefit*, of the *ability* which *God giveth*, and from the rising of the Life, and breaking forth of it (as the Sun from under a Cloud) and not under a Vail or burden; But wait until the way be clear in thy own particular, and the *Power* hath wrought through and scattered all Clouds, and then with open face (and not from under a Vail) doth the Word of Life go forth to the Cherishing of the tender Babes and Plants, and to will there be a Springing of the Life in all; and then he that so Ministers, saves himself and those that hear him, and neither wants *Milk* to feed himself, nor the *Word* to *Minister to others*, but will distinguish in himself between the

Word and the *Milk* of it, and also between that which looks at the passing away of the time, and to answer the Expectation of others in words (or the keeping of its own Authority over others) and that which dwells in the Cross unto all these things, heeding nothing but the rising of the *Life*, and overcoming of the *Power*, and so knows how to behave himself in the *Church of God*, both when to begin, and also when to make an end; Ministering in the *Life*, and reaching to the *Seed* (and not the Judgement and the Affections onely) feeling in himself when the *Seed* is raised, and the *Power* stirs in another, which Sence makes him cease, that the *Life* may speak in whom and when it pleaseth; And so nothing will be quenched, nor none burthened, but *Unity* will be Preserved, and all *Lordship* and *mastership* destroyed, and every Member have its *Liberty*, without being restrained by any thing besides the *Power*; and so every one will prefer others before themselves, keeping no Authority over any, but minding the arising of the *Power* in their own hearts. For what knowest thou, but the *Power* may be quiet and still in thee (be thou never so strong) that it may shew it self in a weaker Vessel, and Perfect its Praise out of the Mouths of *Babes* and *sucklings*, which may be hindered by thy Negligence, in not minding the *Power* in thy self, and *Godsend* in exercising thee in *Silence*, rather then speaking; which may be, either to speak himself in some *Weaker Babe*, or to come forth in thee with greater *Power*, after long exercise in *Silence*, and Patient waiting in the Cross to thy own will, and all that would be any thing out of the *Power*: And hereby the *Simplicity* in all will guide; and the several Gifts, given for Edification of the whole, will Shine, and no *Candle* be under a *Bushel*, nor any Signification of the Spirit resisted; but all will be as *Servants* unto it. And so in this order will there be time for the *Lambs* to feed (in their green Pasture) as well as others to be Exhorted, and the World Instructed. And so will your Meetings be as a *Feast*, and the *Elders* sitting as upon *Thrones* [Judging] (not so much what words are spoken, as what *Life* and *Power* is stirring) all laying down their *Crowns* at the Feet of him that Sits upon the Throne; and so will all take heed how they hear, as well as what they hear; and they that speak,

speak, as well know in *what they speak*, as *what words they utter*; whereby all will be done unto the *praise and glory of God in the Churches*; and, *many will rejoyce to behold your Order*. And this is that behaviour in the Church of God which all must learn, that there may be no *Schism* in the *Body*, but that all may be *preserved in Unity* for ever, and in the *tender bowels of Compassion* one unto another; all being sensible what trespasses have been forgiven them by God the *Father of Mercies*; and they his Children will be *merciful like Him*, knowing their daily dependence is upon Him; and they have no strength nor ability, either to stay where they are, or to go on to *Perfection*, but as it freely flows from Him, upon whom they depend every day for fresh springs, as the Babe upon the Mother's breasts.

Therefore, O ye Children of the living God, be like-minded unto your Father, in *Mercy and Love* one to another, and in his Fear to consider these things, that in his *Saving Health* you may be kept, and none hurt or bruised amongst you.

Meet in the *Faith*, and in *God's Fear*, that your minds may not be suffered to wander (because of the diligent watch) but mind *feeding* more than *bearing*, every one coming as unto a *Feast*, and sitting as in the *Market-Place*, in the *Pure Light* of the *Sun of Righteousness*, that all your *soul's wants* may be *supplied*, and every one return laden and filled with the *Milk and Honey* of the *good Land*, that it may be known and taken notice of by all that converse with you (or come amongst you) that you have been with *JESUS*, and have received of his Vertue from the touches of his *Life*, whereby you that come to Meetings bowed down and heavy laden, may go away with your Issues stopped, and your Burdens removed, praising the Name of the Lord.

And let him that miniſtreth, first feel the state and condition of the Meeting in himself, by the *sensible stirrings* of the *Life*; not judging according to the sight of the eye, or hearing of the ear, but with Righteous Judgement in the *Life*, minding more their state as represented in the Power, than by any outward Intelligence; that so the *Word* may be divided aright, and not handled deceitfully, according to any

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outward guess or judgment, nor corrupted by intermingling the words that man's wisdom teacheth; but let the *Life* put on what cloathes he please; and as it dresseth it self, so let it appear and go forth, thou onely being the *Trumpet*, but the *Breath of Life* must make the *Sound* in what order it pleaseth; and so will all the Babes be refreshed with its Melody, and the Sound be certain, that every Souldier may prepare to the Battel, to help the Lord against the *Mighty* in their own Hearts and Bosoms, and so will the Blessings of the Lord be amongst you.

X Let not Time *limit* you, but in the *Power* and *Wisdom* of God
Y wait to know when he gives leave to depart in *perfect Free-*
dom, lest any go away burdened, by having something stirring
in them, and moving to speak or pray, or otherwise *sound out*
the *Goodness* of the Lord, by what signification the *Spirit* it self
pleaseth, that so you in all things may *stand fast in the Liberty*
wherewith *Christ* hath made you free; not being brought under
the power of any thing, but (every one without respect of
persons) using your own Liberty unto Edification, minding
alwayes the preservation of *Unity in the Body*; more than your
own particular *Ease and Benefit*, avoiding singularity in any thing
(except by a positive Command): lest *Division* or *Separation*
follow.

Let not your ears be open unto every word that is spoken,
lest *dislike* or *prejudice* enter; but mind the *Sound* more than
words, that your *Unity* may stand in the *Spirit* that *speaks*; and
not in the words that are spoken; lest the Affections be *rickled*,
and a *Love* and *Unity* arise from thence, whereby a *false fel-*
lowship will be begotten and held in outward observance (like
the world) and so will *Gifts* and *Persons* come to be set up, and
**Death* and *Formality* encrease; but the *Mystery* of the *Fellow-*
ship in the *Spirit* and *Life* will decay; and so *Forms* and *Power*
will clash, and *Discord* soon enter; and then the *Wisdom* of the
Brain (in the abundance of knowledge) will set up a Judge-
ment against the *tasting palate* and *inward feeling* by the *Power*;
and so may the *Power* come to be lost, or much *abated*, because
its way of Overcoming is rather by *suffering* than *open contest*,
which hitherto hath been the cause that so few have been on
its

its side in Ages past, the greater part going full the other way; but by your keeping in the *savory Spirit*, you will try and judge *all words*, and the *spirits* also from whence they proceed, to the keeping out of all distempers.

Let there be no *Whisperings* among you, nor that nourished which delights to *hear or bear Tales*; but every one minding *their own measures*, which neither *doth nor thinketh any Evil*, but judgeth that, as a Seed sown to cause the Flesh's strength to encrease: for, as that evil seed is *hearkened unto*, it will beget a fellowship in the prejudiced part, unto the *cooling of Love*, and *unruffling of Iniquity*, whereby it will secretly spread it self, to the poysoning of the Tongue with *private smitings*, and also mis-spending of *precious Opportunities* in *unprofitable Discourses*, unto the burdening of the true Seed.

Let no *hatredness* to, nor *judging of one another* be found among you; for your Mother that brought you forth, is free from all these things, swallowing up and covering all, as the Sea the Earth, by infinite depths lower than all, and unmeasurable heights above all; so that all is *cleansed* through it, and *compassed round* by it on every side; that nothing but *perfect Love and Purity* may appear, the *multitude of Evils* being covered by it; so that though they be sought for, yet they shall not be found: And therefore let it appear you are her Children, by *passing by*, and *covering all* with that *Mantle*, which your selves were once *swaddled in*, and to this day are kept *warm by*. But if any thing that is evil spring up in the Garden, let it be soon *wedded out* by the care of the Owner: but when thou seest it either in thy own or neighbour's Garden, let not *anger* nor *fretting* boyl in thee against it, but wait for *Skill* and *Power* to pluck it up, without *hurt* to the *Walks* or *pleasant Flowers*. Do it not in *haste* nor *wrath*, lest thou *up the Top only*, but leave the *Root in the ground* to spread more, and do greater mischief; and so shalt thou in wisdom keep the Garden clean, thy duty discharged unto thy Neighbour, and thy Brother saved from the *sight* of the *Enemy*, and thou shalt shine because thou hast saved him from the *Error* of his way.

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Let *Anger* and *Dislike* be far from thee, not having any place in thy heart; Let not the *Sun* go down in thy wrath; but when thou rememberest thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave thy Gift at the Altar, and go thy way and be first reconciled to thy Brother, and then offer thy Gift upon God's Altar; and so shalt thou meet with acceptance from Him, and thy soul be preserved in his Peace, and thou kept in Unity with thy Brethren.

Let not an Accusation be received against an Elder without two or three Witnesses, that so it may be established to be true, and then in love and bowels of Meekness and tender Compassion, let him know of it privately, that he may be reclaimed, and the body preserved pure, unto the praise of God; and so will all things be done decently and in order, and the Lord God of Life and Power will appear amongst you in Power and great Glory, setting up his Mercy Seat over you, and the Cherubims stretching forth their wings, and covering their faces because of his Presence: and here will be found the substance of all Figures, the Pot with Manna, and the Ark of the Testament, with the Rod that budded, and the Monuments of his Mercy, and Goodness will be brought into remembrance by the Spirit of Truth, and the Glory of this latter House far exceed the former, unto the praise of his everlasting Mercy and Goodness for ever.

For this is the Message which I am to signify unto you in the Name of the Lord God of Hosts, and in his Fear I deliver it.

Thus saith the Lord God of Hosts; I have seen, I have seen the Afflictions of the Afflicted, and their Cry is come in remembrance before me; and I will awake as a Man of War, and come forth as a Giant refreshed with Wine, to finish my Determinations, and to execute mine Own Decrees, and in Righteousness and Judgments will I do it, saith the Lord God. I will plead with

all the Inhabitants of the Earth, as with Fire and Sword, to make my Power known in their Destruction, and to the Salvation of my own Seed, saith the Lord. I will not leave one lost Sheep unfound, nor one Lamb unbrought home, nor Prisoner in the Pit unset free; but I will give Commission unto the Graves to open, for the Dead to arise, and unto the Sea to cast up her slain: for I will deliver, I will deliver the Mourners, and set Free all the Captives, because the Day of the Everlasting Jubilee is come, and the Lord of Sabbaths hath heard the Cry of the Elest, and is risen to Plead their Cause, and to Execute Judgement on their behalf, and to Clear their Innocency before all People. For I will not leave one of them under the Power of the Adversary: for my Decree is to break all Bonds, and to snap all Chains asunder, and to suffer no Bounds nor Limits to be unto my Love: for they shall know the Largeness, Sweetness and Everlastingness of it; like a Sea shall it be unto them to overflow all Banks, and Cover all Mountains and Hills, and to fill them with the Knowledge of my Life and Presence, as the Waters Cover the Sea. I will, I will, saith the Lord God, make the Nations know that I have loved them, and that they are a People saved by the Lord, and the Glory of all Nations, and the Blessing of all Lands. Therefore let no straitness be upon you, nor Gall of Bitterness in you: for this is the Message that I am to deliver unto you from the Lord of Hosts, the God of your Salvation. viz. That your God hath looked upon you with Everlasting Mercy, and upon your scattered Brethren and Sisters, (the Royal Seed of Abraham) that are hungering and thirsting after Righteousness, and will deliver them all, and rend all Mountains that lie in their way, and cleave

all Rocks of Opposition against me, and divide all Waters that Separate from me, saith the Lord of Hosts, that my ransomed may Pass; And this will I do both within and without them: for what I will do in them, shall be as an earnest and Pledge of what I will do without them. Within them shall not be any Root of Bitterness, or other Evil thing, but I will destroy it saith the Lord God. Within them shall Lodge no Ravenous Beast nor Devouring Bird; nor any Evil surmising one against another, nor any Envying shall be found amongst them; but they shall be all Righteous; and the Everlasting Gates shall open at the Word of my Command; and they (the Righteous Nation) shall enter into mine unlimited Glory, and boundless Everlasting Loving-kindness, in the Free Covenant of Life in Christ Jesus, that I may Rejoyce over them to do them good for Ever.

And without them shall not be an Oppressor found to hurt them, nor any Destroyer upon all my Holy Mount, saith the Lord God: for I will rid the Earth of the Bryars and Thorns, and burn up the Straw and Stubble, and consume all the Workers of Iniquity, that my Blessings may come upon my People unto the uttermost; that all Nations, Bond and Free, may hear of my Marvellous Works, and be astonished, and all my Children Comforted together one in another, and in me, saith the Lord God, for ever: for I will fill, I will fill their hearts and their Meetings with my Glory, that they (as the Sons of the Morning) may sing together, and the Voyce of Melody and Gladness may be in them and amongst them to the Ravishing of their hearts, and astonishing of all that behold them; for Jerusalem shall be a Praise, and Sion a Rejoycing unto the Ends of the Earth.

There-

(19)

Therefore lift up your heads, and put on your strength,
O you City of the Living God: for your Walls shall be
Salvation, and your Gates Praise; No complaining
shall be in your Streets, nor Beggar in all your Land;
and Strife and Debate shall for ever be Banished out of
your Dwellings; and Peace and Plenty, Love and
Unity shall be the Motto upon your Houses; and the Om-
nipotent One (the Lord of Hosts) thy Husband, thy Lord,
and thy God for Ever.

From Alisbury common Goal the 19th.
day of the 7th. Month.

J. C.

1661.

THE END.